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AUTHOR McDaniel, Ernest D.
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ABSTRACT

In an attempt to improve the correlation between teacher ratings and self-concept scores, the McDaniel-Piers Young Children's Self Concept Scale, used by McDaniel and Leddick (1978), was revised to more adequately measure a single dimension of self-concept. A 20 item Teacher's Estimate Form (TEF) was developed on which teachers rated children on each attitude or behavior included in the revised self-concept scale. Seventeen elementary teachers and 395 children participated in the study. All teachers completed the TEF for each of their pupils and then administered the revised self-concept scale to their classes. Two months later, the self-concept scale was readministered by the teachers to their pupils. Correlation coefficients were computed between the TEF and the first and second administration of the self-concept scale. Results showed only little improvement over the earlier findings of McDaniel and Leddick (1978) when using a more heterogenous measure of self-concept and a more global rating by teachers. However, the maximum correlation between the teacher ratings and the self-concept scores reached .65 -- an improvement over the earlier findings (.58). (Author/MP)

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TEACHERS' ESTIMATES OF CHILDRENS' SELF-CONCEPTS

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by

Ernest D. McDaniel
Purdue University

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Abstract

Teachers' Estimates of Childrens' Self-Concepts

ERNEST D. MCDANIEL

Purdue University

In an attempt to improve the correlations between teacher ratings and self-concept scores, a self-concept scale was revised to more adequately measure a single dimension of self-concept. A teacher rating form was developed on which teachers rated children on each feeling or behavior included in the revised self-concept scale. Both instruments were used with all teachers and children in one elementary school. Median validity coefficients were not improved over an earlier study using a more heterogenous measure of self-concept and a more global rating by teachers. The maximum coefficient, however, reached .65, an improvement over the earlier findings.

Teachers' Estimates of Children's Self-Concepts

ERNEST D. MCDANIEL
Purdue University

Ernest D. McDaniel
Department of Education
Purdue University
West Lafayette, Indiana
47907

Objective

In an earlier study, McDaniel and Leddick (1978) found a median correlation of .32 between teacher ratings and children's self-concept scores. This investigation essentially replicates the earlier study after revising the self-concept scale to attain greater homogeneity of items and creating a teacher estimate form which reflects the dimensions of the revised scale.

Theoretical Framework

The validation of self-concept measures has proven to be an elusive goal (Wylie, 1974). Perhaps one reason is that self-concept measures tend to be multi-dimensional reflecting the multi-faceted nature of self-concept (Shavelson, Hubner & Stanton, 1976). Efforts to obtain criterion measures which reflect this complexity may end up with amorphous impressions rather than precise measurements. In the McDaniel-Leddick study, teachers ranked their pupils based on a global estimate of the self-concept of each child. Written instructions asked the teachers to consider such diverse elements as home adjustment, peer relationships, school work, physical appearance, and impressions of over-all happiness.

It would seem that validity coefficients between self-concept scores and teacher rating would benefit from two procedures: Revision of self-concept measures so that they more nearly measure a single component of self-concept and development of teacher rating forms that reliably estimate the same component of self-concept.

Method

The McDaniel-Piers Young Children's Self-Concept Scale used by McDaniel and Leddick consists of 40 descriptive statements to which the child responds "yes" or "no"; for example, "I have pretty eyes." The scale includes at least three factors: body image, behavior and feelings (McDaniel & Leddick, 1978). A major revision of this instrument was undertaken by examining the content of each item regarding its probably ability to measure some facet of self-acceptance. The approach draw support from Shepard's (1979) argument that the evaluative aspect of self-concept is the most salient feature of the construct. Shepard defines self-acceptance as the individual's satisfaction or happiness with himself. Thus, such items as, "I want my own way most of the time" were replaced with items such as "I feel good about myself."

Secondly, a high degree of redundancy was built into the scale. Each concept in the scale was measured both by a positive statement and its obverse: "I feel happy most of the time"; "I feel sad a lot of the time." The final scale, the McDaniel-Piers Young Children's Self-Concept Scale, Experimental Form B, has 20 item pairs or

a total of 40 items. In addition to the score, computer scoring procedures provide a consistency score which indicates the consistency with which the twenty item pairs have been answered.

It should be clear that the item selection procedures and the redundancy built into the Experimental Form B should provide a highly reliable index of a single component of self-concept, i.e. self-acceptance.

A 20 item Teacher's Estimate Form was developed which mirrored the revised self-concept scale. The Teacher's Estimate Form obtains a rating by the teacher for each of the 20 concepts measured by the self-concept scale. Teachers respond on a five point scale ranging from "almost always" to "almost never" to the items listed: This child...

1 appears to be happy.
2 has a hard time making friends.
3 is a good reader.
4 is in some kind of trouble.
5 gives up easily.
6 likes to speak up in class.
7 likes his or her looks.
8 is among the last to be chosen for games.
9 finds parents easy to please.
10 wishes he or she were different.
11 when trying to do something, everything goes wrong
12 finds classmates like his or her ideas.
13 can do most things better than other kids.

14 is in a bad mood.

15 feels left out of things.

16 probably wishes he or she could move away from here.

17 feels good about himself or herself.

18 is good in school work.

19 feels mad.

20 feels like a special part of his family.

It should be evident that the Teacher's Estimate Form was designed to replace global estimates of self-concept with specific ratings on those dimensions of self-concept built into the self-concept scale.

Data Source

All teachers in an elementary school in Lafayette, Indiana completed the Teacher's Estimate Form for each of their pupils. The teachers then administered Experimental Form B of the McDaniel-Piers Young Children's Self-Concept Scale to their classes. Approximately two months later, the self-concept scale was readministered by the teachers to their pupils.

Seventeen teachers and 395 children participated in the study. Median class size was 23. Team teaching was used in one second grade class where two teachers taught a group of 45 students.

Data Analysis

All scales were machine scored by the research staff. Split-half reliability coefficients, corrected by the Spearman-Brown

Prophecy Formula, were computed for the Teacher's Estimate Form. Correlation coefficients were computed between the Teacher's Estimate Forms and the first administration of the self-concept scale (Self-Concept 1) and the second administration of the scale (Self-Concept 2). Test-retest reliability coefficients were computed for the self-concept scale.

Results and Discussion

The results of all calculations are presented separately for each teacher in Table 1.

Insert Table 1 About Here

Inspection of Table 1 reveals that for the first administration of the self-concept scale, the correlations with teacher ratings ranged from .01 to .65 with a median of .31. For the second administration of the self-concept scale, the correlations with teacher ratings ranged from -.01 to .63 with a median of .28.

The results reported show only a little improvement over the earlier findings of McDaniel and Leddick (1978) when using the original McDaniel-Piers Young Children's Self-Concept Scale and global teacher rankings with a sample of 20 teachers (range: -.01 to .58, median: .32).

The major improvement achieved by the procedures employed in this study was an elevation of the maximum correlation between the

teacher ratings and the self-concept scores, .65 compared to the earlier .58.

The reliability coefficients associated with each of the measures used in this study allow an estimate of the "true" relationships which may exist between the two indices of self-concept. Using formula 7 in Thorndike and Hagen (1977) applied to the median values in this study, an estimate of .36 is obtained as the probable relationship between teacher ratings and self-concept scores if the instruments employed were free of measurement error. Using the same procedure with the maximum values of this study (teacher A, grade 6) one obtains an estimated correlation of .76 as the "true" relationship between this teacher's estimate of self-concept and the scores of the pupils in her class.

The notion that "true" correlations as high as .76 between teacher ratings and self-concept scores may exist should be very encouraging to workers in a field beset with problems of validity. On the other hand, it is discouraging that median validity coefficients in the range of .30 are found even in a study designed to maximize these coefficients. One consistent observation across the earlier study by McDaniel and Leddick and the present study is the large variation in teacher's ability to estimate the self-concept scores of their children. Given instruments for collecting teacher ratings that have a high reliability and which closely parallel the self-concept measure, perhaps additional research should focus on attempts to identify the characteristics of teachers who are unusually good at estimating the self-concepts of their pupils.

Table 1
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Teacher	n	Reliability of Teacher Estimate	Correlation of Teacher Estimate with Self-concept 1	Correlation of Teacher Estimate with Self-concept 2	Test-Retest Reliability of Self-concept
Grade 1					
A	28	.95	.25	.27	.68
B	17	.96	.23	.45	.68
C	26	.87	.39	.01	a
Grade 2					
A & B	45	.95	.43	.35	.72
C	21	.85	.13	.24	.74
Grade 3					
A	25	.91	.30	-.01	.25
B	22	.90	.32	.11	.80
C	23	.94	.01	.03	.81
Grade 4					
A	23	.89	.35	.25	.85
B	22	.96	.20	.29	.78
C	22	.94	.36	.39	.80
Grade 5					
A	23	.94	.44	.62	.88
B	21	.90	.17	.24	.61
C	22	.91	.61	.63	.91
Grade 6					
A	30	.92	.65	.58	.80
B	25	.95	.24	.35	.73
Medians		.93	.31	.28	.78

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